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*The Game of Chess.*

Engraved by C. Hurt, from the Original Picture by R. C. Woodville, in possession of the American Art Union.

# BULLETIN OF THE AMERICAN ART-UNION



NEW-YORK, JULY 1, 1851.

## THE ILLUSTRATIONS.

We have the pleasure of presenting to our readers this month an etching by BURT from WOODVILLE's picture of the *Game of Chess*, which is to be included in the next distribution of the Art-Union, and is, in some respects, superior to any previous work of its author. We republish the description of it that we gave in the April number of the Bulletin.

"It represents the interior of the sitting-room of a noble mansion in the days of the Tudors. On the right rises the immense fire-place, with its frontispiece of variegated marbles, supported by statues and richly carved in the style of the Renaissance. On the right of this, in the immediate foreground, is a lecturn, upon which rests a book and a lady's kerchief. Standing with his back to the fire before the chimney is a portly gentleman—probably the father of the family, about going forth for a ride, as he has his cap on his head—wears high boots of buff leather, with spurs, and an outer-coat of velvet trimmed with fur. He stands with his hands behind him in an easy attitude, overlooking a game of chess which a visitor is playing with the daughter of the house. The visitor is on the left of the picture, and sits with his back to the spectator, and in front is a table which supports the chess-board. On the other side is the young lady, whose eyes are fixed upon the game, while the cavalier is lifting a piece with his hand and looking towards the father as if for approbation of his move. The mother, and a page, complete the group. This is a tranquil, pleasant picture, in which the characters of the personages are very nicely indicated. It places the spectator in the very midst of the domestic life of the times it portrays. It is, however, in the distribution of light and shadow, and the wonderful fidelity of its imitations, that the work is most remarkable. The effect of the light upon the carved marble is done with wonderful skill, and the representation of velvet, fur, satin, and metals, worthy of a Micris or a Metzu."

Our readers will also find in the body of the present number the second of DARLEY's etchings in outline, of which, it will be remembered, a series of four has been commissioned for this volume of the Bulletin. It is taken from the last chapter of Cooper's *Pioneers*, and represents Oliver Effingham and his wife Elizabeth meeting Leather-Stocking at the grave of his old companion, Chingachgook, just before his leaving the white settlements to end his days in the prairies. The following extract describes the scene:—

"The place at which they arrived was the little spot of level ground where the cabin of the Leather-Stocking had so long stood. Elizabeth found it entirely cleared of rubbish, and beautifully laid down in turf, by the removal of sods, which, in common with the surrounding country, had grown gay under the influence of profuse showers, as if a second spring had passed over the land. The little place was surrounded by a circle of mason work, and they,

entered by a small gate, near which, to the surprise of both, the rifle of Natty was leaning against the wall. Hector, the slut, reposed on the grass by its side, as if conscious that, however altered, they were relying on the ground, and were surrounded by objects with which they were familiar. The hunter himself was stretched on the earth, before a headstone of white marble, pushing aside with his fingers the long grass that had already sprung up from the luxuriant soil around its base, apparently to lay bare the inscription. By the side of this stone, which was a simple slab at the head of a grave, stood a rich monument, decorated with an urn, and ornamented with the chisel."

"Oliver and Elizabeth approached the graves with a light tread, unheard by the old hunter, whose sunburnt face was working, and whose eyes twinkled as if something impeded their vision."

The woodcuts are illustrations of the treatise on the ART OF SKETCHING FROM NATURE, and the *Filatrice*, a bronze statuette by BROWN, of which twenty examples were distributed among the members of the year 1850. This last engraving is by Bobbett and Edmonds, from a drawing by Wallin.

## THE ART OF SKETCHING FROM NATURE.

In accordance with an intention we announced in respect to this volume of the Bulletin, to furnish in it, from time to time, articles of practical value, and suited to the wants of beginners, we now commence the republication of a brief work upon the ART OF SKETCHING FROM NATURE, which has already passed through several editions in England, where it is extensively and deservedly popular. The author of the text is Thomas Rowbotham, Professor of Drawing to the Royal Naval School, and the illustrations, of which we present fac-similes, were designed by Thomas L. Rowbotham, jr. The author, in his preface, says, that "many students possessing a certain degree of skill in the use of the lead pencil and chalk, are, for want of acquaintance with the necessary rules entirely at a loss, when attempting to commence a landscape sketch from nature: the principal difficulties they experience being to determine *where to commence the sketch, and how much of the subject before them they ought to include within the limits of the paper.*"

"Attention to the precepts contained herein, will, it is hoped, clear away these and many other difficulties that obstruct the essay of the sketcher."

"The short course of instruction laid down is purely elementary, and confined to *linear sketching*. The limits of this little work do not admit of the introduction of the more advanced stages of coloring and its complex manipulations."

We may add, however, that we have procured several other English works, which are parts of the same series to which the present one belongs, and give, in an intelligible manner, instruction in the art of landscape painting, both in oils and water color. These we may also republish at some future day. THE ART OF SKETCHING FROM NATURE will be completed in three numbers of the Bulletin.

## SKETCHING FROM NATURE.

In the brief course of instruction proposed in the following pages, the object is to lead the student to a successful result by the simplest means. The rules are few; but if carefully studied, they will be found applicable to every object occurring in ordinary experience; and it is hoped that they will be deemed plain and intelligible. A multiplicity of technical terms and

prolix explanations would not advance the student to the desired end; but there are yet some terms which it may be requisite to explain, as they frequently, and necessarily, occur in the course of these precepts. They are

The Picture.

The Centre of the Picture: commonly, but erroneously, called the point of sight.

The Distance of the Picture: generally called the point of distance.

The Base Line.

The Horizontal Line.

The Vertical Line.

For the sake of rendering these instructions more clear and perspicuous, we shall recapitulate a few of the general principles of linear perspective. This recapitulation will be rapid and concise; touching only upon those more important points which are in fact indispensable in successful sketching from nature; and we also purpose to explain the general terms given above. In fact, our object is rather to recall to the recollection of the learner certain principles and methods, with which we suppose him to be already acquainted,—the study of the elements of perspective being indeed the very first process to which the attention of the learner should be directed in his introduction to the art of drawing.

All objects which present themselves to the eye in a landscape, such as houses, trees, water, fields, mountains, &c., can be faithfully drawn in corresponding and similar outlines upon a plane surface.

For if a piece of glass be held at a proper distance between the eye and the proposed landscape, so that the part intended to be drawn can be seen through it, it is evident that a tracing of the apparent outlines of all the objects so seen through the glass can be made upon its surface, by the use of any instrument, which when carefully guided over the outlines of the objects would leave, by means of color or any other substance, the traces of its path.

As it is impossible to adopt this process in drawing from nature, the material on which the outline is made being paper, it is clear that sketching can be only effected by a distinct apprehension of the *real* forms of the objects themselves, and those *apparent* forms under which they are presented to the eye in their different positions in the landscape.

Now many of these objects have their real outlines, composed of straight lines, or of curved lines, or of both, which either may be irregular in their relation to each other, or may follow in certain given lines. If the latter be the case, these laws are for the most part of such a simple character as to admit of being easily comprehended; and, when once the principles, which we shall by-and-by enumerate, are mastered and understood, in the representation of the more complex forms of outline, the student will find an increasing facility, as his judgment becomes more matured and his eye more correct.

## OF THE HORIZONTAL LINE.

If a spectator were placed in a flat horizontal plain, the water or ground which he would have in view before him would appear to rise from the spot on which he stood, the limit of that rise being bounded by a clear and well-defined straight line, called the *horizontal line*. This will at once be understood, in the example of the sea or of a lake, between which and the sky, no object is supposed to intervene.

This horizontal line, or (as the word implies) this boundary, lies exactly opposite to the range of the eye, in moving round from left to right, or from right to left, when the spectator looks in a direction before him; neither above nor below the natural plane of his vision. It is important that the learner should have a clear and distinct apprehension of what the horizontal line is; because it is to this line that every other line is referred, and by its means that the accuracy of the drawing is secured.

## DISTANCE OF THE PICTURE.

In Fig. 1, a landscape is supposed to be viewed by the student from the spot marked *E*, from

